



# Medway Youth Justice Partnership

## STRATEGIC PLAN

### 2020-2023

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A '**child first**' partnership commitment to reducing youth crime and creating safer communities in Medway.

Strood Youth Centre, Montfort Road Rochester, Kent, ME2 3ET

## **Foreword by James Williams (Chair of the Board and Director of Public Health)**

As chair of Medway Youth Justice Partnership Board, I am delighted to introduce our 3 year strategic youth justice plan for 2020-2023. This plan reflects on our successes as a partnership. It describes the manner in which we will continue to deliver high quality, high performing youth justice services over the next 3 years. The achievement of our objectives will be underpinned by the use of a public health approach.

Over the last 3 years, we have strengthened our partnership. We have been recognised as innovative leaders in the field of youth justice. Last year we presented at the National Justice Conference to talk about our work. We have subsequently been asked to work with national leads and universities, who want to learn more about how we have developed our desistance approach and child first plans.

There has been a marked change in the identified needs and complexities of the challenges affecting the children and young people we support. We have seen an increase in violent youth crime and weapon related incidents. Addressing these issues will be a focus for us over the coming 3 years. To enable this, we are moving into a trauma informed youth justice service. We have recruited a clinical psychologist to increase our capability to support our more complex children. We have continued our collaborative work with the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent. This partnership work led to a successful bid to central government for resources that have enabled us to establish a Violence Reduction Unit. We have also recently accessed additional resources to put in place a North Kent initiative to address serious youth violence.

This additional capacity will help us to move to a more intelligence led youth justice service. It will enhance our ability to focus our work with those that need us the most and deliver high quality and effective interventions.

Staff retention has been a notable success. Through proactive workforce development, we have been able to retain and attract experienced and capable professionals, from an array of different disciplines and professional backgrounds, to work in Medway. Our skilled workforce enables us to continue to improve and embed good practice to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people. However, we must not allow ourselves to become complacent about our successes.

Over the next 3 years significant changes are anticipated across the criminal justice system. There is likely to be a continuing reduction in resources available to the public sector. As a Youth Justice Partnership Board, we believe that a longer-term plan is essential to mitigate against these issues. We must build in resilience to enable us to sustain our strong performance and reform our practice in line with any proposed local or national changes to the youth justice system.

Our strategy aims to:

1. Deliver an effective youth justice system through a strong partnership approach
2. Focus on reducing reoffending rates
3. Build on our evidence based approach through effective use of performance data and intelligence
4. Optimise our effectiveness through collaboration and learning from best practice

The Youth Offending Team now sits within Public Health. There is a significant transformation programme currently in progress across the health and social care landscape. The realignment of youth offending to the public health function, creates a range of opportunities to further engage with our NHS and social care partners to effective lasting change for young people and their families.

Our plan sets out how we will deliver against the core objectives of a youth justice system. It details the specific actions we will take to prevent and reduce youth crime, safeguard children and young people at risk of, or involved in offending and protect the public from harm. We will address the human and financial costs of crime, through early targeted intervention and prevention.

We will do this by continuing to use our collective partnership resources in the most effective way. We will identify and work with the small cohort of young people, many of whom are vulnerable, whose circumstances mean they are more likely to have prolonged contact with the youth justice system. We will put in place measures to transform their behaviours and actions, through gaining a better understanding of the risk factors and triggers that give rise to negative behaviours. Wherever appropriate we will do our work without requiring recourse to the formal criminal justice system, reducing youth crime, creating fewer victims and making communities safer.

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**James Williams (Chair of the Board and Director of Public Health)**

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## **Youth Justice Partnership Strategic Plan**

### **2020-2023**

#### **Introduction and Context**

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, requires Local Authorities to have a Youth Justice Plan which is annually updated to set out how youth justice will be delivered locally within available resources. This Plan will cover a 3 year period from 2020– 2023 and has been co-produced with Youth Justice Partnership Board (YJPB) members, The Young Peoples Advisory Group (YPAG) and influenced by national research and evidence of effective practice taking examples across national partnerships.

Our plan will be refreshed each year, reflecting any changes to the national and local youth justice landscape which impact on the strategic priorities and the way in which the whole youth justice partnership will deliver a range of services designed to reduce youth offending within Medway. The strategic priorities, which will underpin our action planning cycle over the 3-year period, are congruent with the principal aims of the youth justice system. They are:

1. Prevent Youth Crime
2. Reduce Re-offending
3. Safeguard young people from harm
4. Protect the public from harm

Although we will ensure these priorities are monitored we will have one, that will be our 'obsession'.

#### **- Reoffending**

To deliver this effectively, our focus will be on:

1. Data analysis and intelligence lead youth justice services
2. Partnership working with the Violent Reduction Unit, Serious Youth Violence Programme, County Lines/ Gangs and Medway Task Force
3. Health outcomes (specifically emotional health and wellbeing and speech and language)
4. Education Training and Employment
5. Intensive packages of intervention
6. Work force development (example restorative justice and trauma informed practice)

And

7. Implement new national standards

This plan will continue to reflect the development of a youth justice service, ensuring that priorities and actions are a partnership endeavour, rather than a plan related to oversight of a single youth offending service/ team.

The YJPB will retain a clear focus on the principal aim of reducing offending and re-offending whilst, maintaining strategic oversight of the delivery and performance of the local youth justice system and the contribution of all partners. However, Medway, this year, needs to have a clear focus on reoffending.

The membership of the board provides senior representation from key partners to ensure that young people involved in the youth justice system have access to a range of services to support the partnership's responsibilities under Crime & Disorder Act 1998 to:

- Co-ordinate the provision of youth justice services for all those in the authority's area who need them
- Carry out such functions assigned in the youth justice plan formulated by the local authority.
- In addition, by providing the youth justice services outlined at Section 38 (4) of the Act, the local authority also addresses its duty, under the Children Act 1989, to take reasonable steps designed to encourage children and young people within the area not to commit offences.

This 3-year youth justice strategy reflects a dynamic youth justice partnership committed to establishing long-term strategic objectives. These objectives will be achieved through continuing to provide innovative, partnership and solution-focused leadership to support the delivery of our key priorities. Such an approach recognises a fundamental need for the partnership to remain agile and responsive to changing legislation, policy, demographic and funding scenarios without sacrificing quality or our commitment to strive to prevent and reduce youth crime.

A restorative approach to our work with young people, which puts victims at the heart of the youth justice process, will be a key theme running throughout our partnership activity to deliver upon our strategic priorities. We have seen the emergence of:

- Violent youth crime
- Weapon related offences
- Burglary
- Drug offences

Through Police intelligence we know we have one active gang in Medway but we have seen County Lines as the single and greatest risk to our children and young people where they are criminally exploited into this activity. We will continue to work with the Police, the Violence Reduction Unit (VRU), Medway Task Force (MTF), the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) and Children's Services (CS) to ensure we are joined up in our approach to reduce offending but also understand contextual safeguarding.

## **Our Ambition for 2020 to 2023**

Our ambition is that, through effective partnership working, children and young people at risk of or involved in offending, will be engaged and supported to fulfil their potential and:

Thrive (in their community)

Learn and develop (through education, training or employment)

Be Healthy (easy and natural access and support)

Local partnership arrangements (between January 2018 and December 2019) have had a transformational impact on youth justice, reforming many elements of the system and improving outcomes for young people, victims and communities. The YOT has provided an holistic and integrated case management response in supporting vulnerable young people to overcome barriers, including offending, that may inhibit achievement of full potential in adulthood.

Our strategy over the next 3-years will continue to optimise the transformational opportunities of this approach and the shifting of resource towards prevention, which provides better value for money and opportunities to reduce youth crime and equip young people with the skills to become independent and contributing adults.

We want to further develop a partnership approach that can differentiate those young people who are at risk of, or are experiencing a combination of safeguarding and vulnerability factors that, unless addressed, make prolonged contact with the youth justice system more likely. We need to ensure we have effective pathways and work with whole families (when right to do so) to further impact on a young person's risks of offending. and This will be support but the new integrated adolescent model in Children's Services.

Analysing offending through a safeguarding 'lens' where the most prolific young people are recognised as also the most 'troubled', rather than 'troublesome', will lead to a transformational shift of how youth justice services and interventions are delivered over the next 3-years and how offending by young people is understood.

**\*\*\*\*\* This is Medway Child First approach \*\*\*\*\***

We believe that this 3-year strategic plan provides the greatest opportunity to deliver sustainable high quality youth justice outcomes, which can withstand short, medium and longer term risks. To deliver the partnership strategy we will align youth justice partnership activity with four strategic priorities that, through complementary quality assurance, partnership working, workforce development and governance, will provide a foundation and framework for planning the delivery of exceptional youth justice outcomes over the next 3-years.

## **Strategic Priorities 2020-2023**

|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b><u>Prevent</u><br/>Youth Crime</b>    | <b><u>Reduce</u><br/>Re-offending</b> |
| <b><u>Safeguard</u><br/>young people</b> | <b><u>Protect</u><br/>the public</b>  |

**Quality Assurance  
Workforce Development  
Partnership Activity  
Governance**



## **Strategic Priority 1 - Prevent Youth Crime**

### **Why is this a priority? Crime and Disorder Act s.37. (1) It shall be the principal aim of the youth justice system to prevent offending by children and young persons**

Intervening earlier to address risk and vulnerability factors and build upon strengths prevents young people identified as at risk of offending from going on to become established offenders thereby improving their life chances and reducing the harm caused to others. The factors associated with persistent offending can be recognised and addressed before they lead to patterns of behaviour which will be harmful for the young person and others.

To be effective in this area, we need to apply a whole system approach to ensure those at risk receive support at the earliest opportunity. For the youth justice partnership service we need to identify and intervene earlier with those young people whose vulnerability and safeguarding risks are identified through highly effective Out Of Court Disposals processes.

### **What we aim to achieve**

1. To improve the life chances of children and young people in Medway, including improved emotional health and wellbeing providing easy and natural access to services when they need help quickly.
2. Improved participation in education, training and employment by those with specific barriers to learning.
3. Improved family relationships by ensuring Early Help and Targeted Services support families in need of help through evidence based intervention (example restorative justice, trauma informed practice, family group conferencing).
4. To understand and respond to the potentially changing nature of youth crime e.g, criminal exploitation, extremism and radicalisation, child-sexual exploitation and gang associated drug dealing expanding along 'County Lines'.
5. Ensure our youth justice partnership strategic prevention priority and approach is embedded in Early Help and other relevant safeguarding areas such as Children's Services front door and multi-agency safeguarding hub.

### **What we will do?**

1. Maintain a low level of first time entrants (including looked after children and other identifiable vulnerable groups) into the youth justice system through the Police joint decision making partnership panel whilst ensuring those in need of help are referred to appropriate agency (Early Help) and also apply a strategic oversight panel.
2. We will review Out Of Court Disposals (OCD) where a decision for no further action has been applied on more than 2 occasions.
3. Develop an action plan led by Medway Police to reduce the number of children and young people arrested and dealt with in police custody suites with particular attention to reducing overnight detention through the implementation of a revised protocol.
4. Continue to resource Emotional Health and Wellbeing service within the team to ensure young people's needs are assessed and supported.

5. YOT to work with education colleagues to explore how they might complement the offer to schools with regard to supporting young people at risk of exclusion to maintain their education within a mainstream setting or suitable alternative and improve attendance.
6. Continue to resource an information, advice and guidance resource to support young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

**How will we know we are succeeding?**

1. The rate of first time entrants to the criminal justice system declines.
2. The rate of NFA reduces.
3. Early Help referral increase from the Police (Police complete an Early Help Assessments) and reduction in safeguarding referrals from the Police.
4. Increase referral into NELFT and improved access and intervention pathways
5. Schools report less fixed term exclusions, improved attendance and behaviour of those students identified as at greatest likelihood of offending.
6. Fewer looked after children and care leavers will become involved in the criminal justice system.
7. Reduction in young people that are NEET.

## **Strategic Priority 2 – Reduce re-offending**

### **Why is this a priority? Reducing re-offending is one of three national indicators for youth justice and the number one priority for the national Youth Justice Board**

Reducing re-offending by young people can significantly improve their life course outcomes. Breaking the cycle of re-offending, particularly where this offending has become prolific and contributes to a disproportionate amount of total youth crime, means that our communities will be safer and there will be fewer victims of crime. The savings from reduced reoffending and the need for formal, acute youth justice intervention also enables a shift of resource towards prevention of offending.

### **What we aim to achieve**

1. To reduce re-offending by young people in Medway with a particular focus on the relatively small proportion of young people who commit a disproportionate amount of crime in Medway.
2. Good assessments, intervention and exit plans exist, providing young people with the framework to fulfil their potential through trusted relationships (meaningful and purposeful engagement and participation).
3. To develop responses to re-offending that recognise those who persistently offend have overwhelming experienced the most complex needs and deliver a trauma informed approach to those needing support.
4. To ensure that those committing offences are seen as young people first rather than 'young offenders' (Child First model).
5. To develop high quality interventions that contribute to reducing re-offending and maintain the confidence of partner agencies, the courts and the general public.
6. Develop an intensive support service/ package to engage with those at most risk through our floating support commissioned services, supported through the violence reduction unit, serious youth violence and Medway task force
7. Ensure the highest quality though care and resettlement planning is available working closely with the designated social workers.

### **What we will do**

1. The youth justice service will lead the implementation of the partnership actions within the plan (2017-20).
2. The YJP board will monitor and apply scrutiny (of the partnership endeavour) to reduce reoffending and will make it an 'obsession'.
3. The youth justice service will recruit a psychologist
4. The youth justice service will recruit a performance, data and intelligence lead
5. The youth justice service will continue to support a young person at risk of re-offending following completion of a court order or will ensure appropriate pathways are in place for young people needing additional support.
6. The youth justice service will review the effectiveness of current 1-1 and group work approaches and interventions to reducing re-offending, particularly those aimed at the most prolifically offending young people, and will develop and re-design

accordingly, with a greater focus on how safeguarding and diversity needs (e.g. communication and learning styles) are being met whilst working with Medway Community Healthcare. This should involve co-production with young people.

7. Given the shared responsibility of youth justice service & Community Safety Partnerships (CSP's) to reduce offending, we will ensure that local delivery plans are integrated and reflect the needs assessment of each area through analytical intelligence.
8. The youth justice service and the National Probation Service will continue to jointly fund one post that manages cases in transition ensuring consistency in delivery, relationships and minimising transfers.
9. The YJPB, VRU and Ending Serious Youth Violence programmes will support and fund resources to deliver intensive packages around our young people at greatest risk of reoffending.

And

10. Through the youth justice service quality assurance framework we will ensure that case management of young people in the statutory youth justice system fulfils the expectations of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) and National Standards for youth justice.

### **How will we know we are succeeding?**

1. Re-offending, particularly amongst those who are disproportionately committing the most youth crime, is reducing.
2. The ability to create offending profiles and support those in greatest need
3. Data and intelligence driving improvements
4. The above is supported by a revised offer of interventions that address reducing re-offending with sufficient focus upon the safeguarding and vulnerability of young people who offend as well as their offending behaviour.
5. The re-offending of the group of young people transitioning between youth and adult probation services is reducing.
6. Increase those accessing support for speech and language support
7. Young people tell us we are making a difference
8. Increase in those accessing education, training and employment (reduction in NEET)
9. Strategic leads and golden thread in our work reflects that reoffending is our 'obsession'

And

10. Feedback in HMIP inspection outcomes (including other inspectorate frameworks such as OFSTED, CQC and JTAI).

### **Strategic Priority 3 - Safeguard young people from harm**

#### **Why is this a priority? Safeguarding is a statutory duty for youth justice agencies resulting from the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013**

We have a duty to take all reasonable steps to protect young people from harm both when they are victims and perpetrators of offences. Young people involved in offending or at risk of offending are significantly more likely to be victims of abuse or neglect and disproportionately affected by poverty, inconsistent/ neglectful parenting, reduced educational and employment opportunities and mental health problems.

Young people who offend often take part in other risky behaviours such as drug taking, alcohol misuse or inappropriate sexual activity. This can make them vulnerable to sexual exploitation, violence and abuse from others. In addition safeguarding concerns can be exacerbated where a young person enters the custodial estate.

#### **What we aim to achieve**

1. To ensure that all young people who are at risk of, or involved in offending, which makes them more vulnerable to harm from their own behaviour or that of others are supported in reducing their vulnerability and increasing their safety.
2. To ensure that where vulnerability and risk to the public overlap, safeguarding needs are given sufficient attention in agency plans to address offending behaviour. For example, where young people's offending behaviour is being influenced by their own experiences of exploitative and abusive relationships.
3. To continue to reduce the use of prison/secure custody for Medway young people, given the adverse impact on safeguarding risks and to also ensure that time spent in police custody is minimised and the environment is more young person friendly.
4. Implement intensive packages of intervention to those at greatest risk
5. Promote improved engagement between young people and the police to enable young people to recognise that the police are there to protect them.
6. To ensure that where a child or young person is a victim of crime they have the support they need to cope and recover and are appropriately safeguarded if they are required to be involved in criminal justice proceedings.
7. Seek to safeguard those whose offending is most likely to be influenced by their vulnerability such as:
  - Looked after children
  - Those in or associated with a gang
  - Young carers
  - Emotional health and wellbeing risks
  - Sexually exploited
  - Those in abusive partner relationships or
  - Witnessing domestic abuse within a family context.

## What we will do

1. We will seek to improve the early identification of and response to safeguarding issues associated with young people who have offended or come to the notice of the police and children's services as potential victims by improving links between the MASH and YOT/ Police and partnership panel.
2. We will review joint working practices between YOT, Children's Services and Health Services where they are working with the same young person due to offending behaviour and well-being/ safeguarding needs.
3. Planning is always integrated and joined up in practice.
4. We will maintain low numbers of young people entering the youth justice system for the first time, in recognition that the unnecessary criminalisation of young people can be a safeguarding risk in itself.
5. Establish an early help framework to 'step down' all youth justice cases that do not meet children's services thresholds but are still identified with complex needs at the point of YOT case closure.
6. All relevant partnership professionals should complete safeguarding training relating to child sexual exploitation awareness, early identification and appropriate responses.
7. A working group through the local Criminal Justice Board will be established to seek to improve the timeliness between arrest, charge and court outcome, given the impact on young people's vulnerability where such processes are excessively lengthy.
8. The commissioned emotional health and wellbeing service will ensure that mental health diversion schemes are available for and tailored to supporting young people to ensure appropriate diversion and response to need.
9. The YOT and partners will continue to develop effective interventions for young people at risk of child sexual exploitation, those affected by parental domestic abuse or experiencing domestic abuse or those engaging in sexually harmful behaviour.
10. The MSCP will review and implement learning from any relevant critical learning or serious case reviews of youth justice cases where safeguarding was a feature.
11. We will further reduce the use of custody (both sentence and remand) by retaining the confidence of the youth and crown court in alternative sentences and bail packages in the community. Where young people are sentenced to custody or remanded the YOT will ensure that co-ordinated resettlement planning with the secure estate and other partners begins immediately, in order to reduce vulnerability upon release.
12. Working with the Kent and Medway Criminal Justice Partnership Board (CJPB) and Office for the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) we will ensure young victims and witnesses are provided with appropriate support and protection within criminal justice proceedings and have access to services that will support their recovery.

**How will we know we are succeeding?**

1. Fewer young people are entering the formal criminal justice system.
2. The relevant professional network is demonstrating a better understanding of indicators of vulnerability related to offending and is responding accordingly as indicated through quality assurance and inspection processes.
3. The administration and process of justice, including decision making about charge is quicker and less uncertain for young people.
4. Effective interventions are available and utilised by young people involved in offending who may also be experiencing other risk factors (DA, CSE etc.)..
5. Fewer young people are receiving custodial sentences and fewer are remanded in custody.
6. A bespoke emotional health and wellbeing service is achieving better outcomes for young people in the criminal justice system (waiting times for assessment and treatment improves).

## **Strategic Priority 4 – Protect the public from harm**

### **Why make this a priority? It is the first responsibility of all criminal justice agencies to protect the public**

Effective risk assessment and management practices that seek to protect the public from harm and reduce the impact of offending on the local community are crucial in meeting this priority and are more likely to be achieved through an integrated, multi-agency partnership approach. There are relatively few young people in Medway whose offending presents a significant risk of serious harm to the public but where this is present management of the risk must be prioritised.

### **What we aim to achieve**

1. To ensure that children and young people who pose a risk of harm to others are appropriately assessed and effectively supervised to promote a reduction in that risk. Then recognise and respond at the earliest opportunity, where it is an indicator of potential harm to others.
2. To recognise that serious harmful behaviour to others is often a symptom of significant distress and vulnerability, which needs to be addressed through a safeguarding approach for that risk to reduce.
3. To minimise the potential for a 'transition gap' between youth and adult services where risk of harm to others is relevant.
4. Ensure that the risks are understood and employed within the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).

### **What we will do**

1. Maintain an accurate YOT risk register that details all those young people known to the service deemed to present a high risk of harm to others. Senior management oversight of the register will be undertaken through the YOT risk panel.
2. Through the YOT quality assurance framework we will ensure that practice in relation to risk of harm to others is robust and meets the expected standards of HMIP.
3. Implement the MAPPA protocol.
4. Deliver a multi-agency audit programme (creating a critical friend in quality assurance)

### **How will we know we are succeeding?**

1. Incidents of significant harm to the public are reducing, including a reduction in notifications to the Youth Justice Board (YJB) for further serious incidents committed by young people under statutory youth justice supervision.
2. There is a reduction in cases needing to be notified to and managed through MAPPA.
3. Victims of serious youth offending are accessing appropriate support and restorative justice is always made available to them.
4. Quality assurance processes reflect increased quality of assessment and risk management.



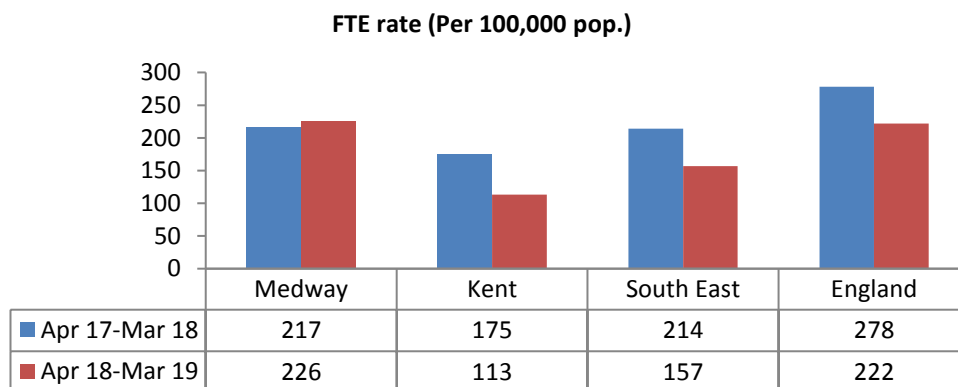
## Performance overview— What have we already achieved?

There are three National Indicators for the youth justice system introduced in April 2011. These are:

- 1. First time entrants to the youth justice system**
- 2. Reoffending of young people in the youth justice system**
- 3. Use of custody for young people**

### 1. First time entrants

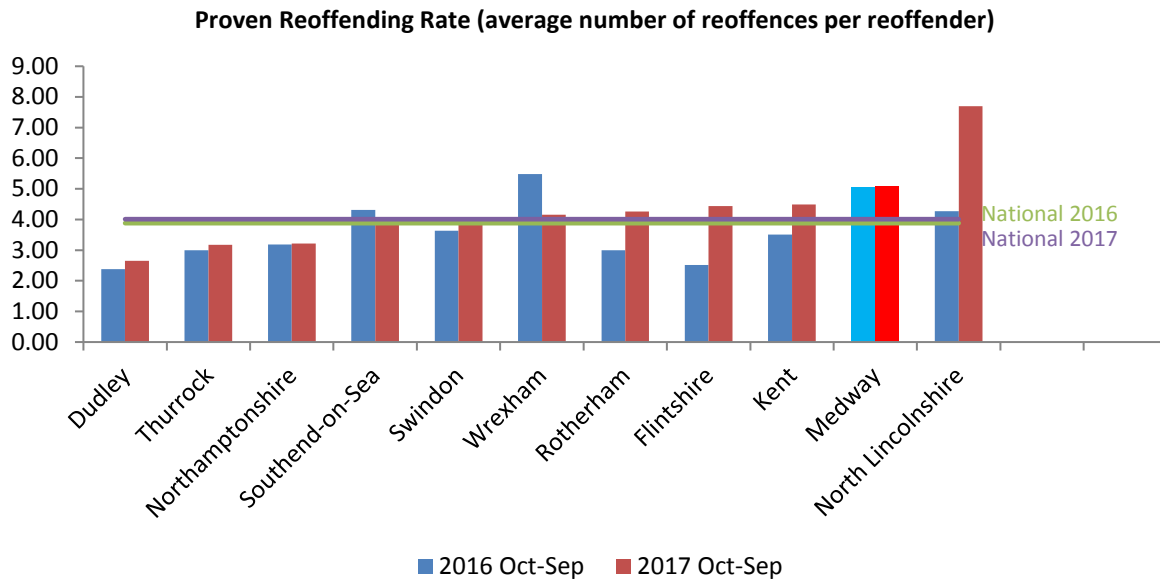
Preventing entrance to the criminal justice system is closely related to the safeguarding and preventing offending priorities. Medway has seen an increase in young people entering the criminal justice system meaning we need to ensure young people that come into contact with the Police are signposted into appropriate support (through Early Help pathways).



### 2. Reoffending of young people in the youth justice system

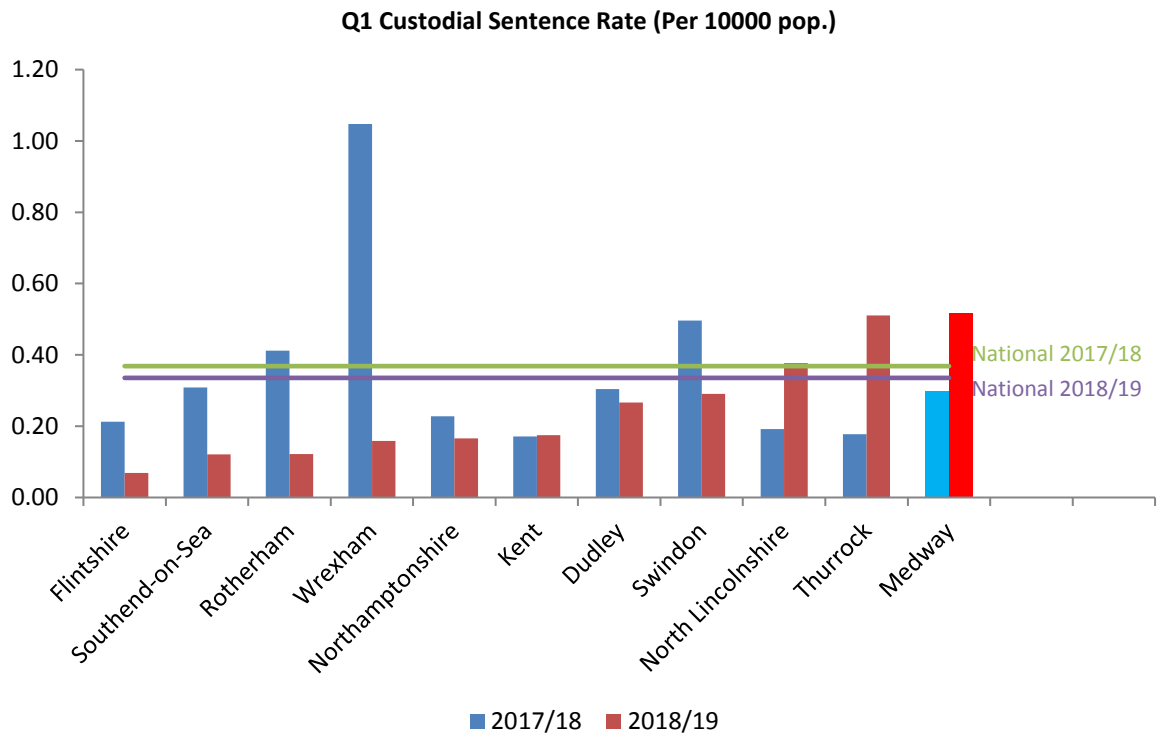
The proven rate of re-offending relates to strategic priorities around reducing re-offending, safeguarding, public protection. The re-offending of the relatively small proportion of young people within the formal system it is now a significant priority (our obsession) to address this area of work in Medway. We know that young people present more complex needs than previously experienced and we need to do more as a partnership to address this critical and wicked issue.

Reducing the number of young people re-offending is a national issue where most authorities have seen an increase this year in reoffending.



### 3. Use of custody for young people

The use of custody relates to safeguarding, reducing re-offending & protecting the public priorities. Medway has seen a significant increase in young people accessing youth custody. These numbers represent 14 young people and a number relate to the same incidents.



## **Risks and Resources**

The YOT costs considerably less than it did three years ago and the partnership engagement and influence within the YOT has improved over the last 2 years ensuring we have moved from a YOT to a youth justice service. This is reflective of the team and the current structure and arrangements. The complexity of young people coming through the service mean we need to improve our work force development and ensure our staff are skilled and supported in their practice. Reoffending is the YJPB greatest risk area and a focus on our plan.

The development of the integrated adolescent team, the Medway task force, the violence reduction unit and ending serious youth violence programmes, create real opportunities for joint work through additional resource. It is important that these work streams are joined together and take the opportunity to impact on this key area of work. Although all aspects have specific areas of focus, young people and reoffending is at the heart of all programmes.

## **Education:**

To support children and young people achieve outcomes, the work Medway undertakes with Schools, pupil referral units, alternative provision and colleges will be key. Our links with the Attendance Advisory Support for Schools and Academies to address attendance concerns will be important along that with inclusions. Any challenges will be addressed through the Schools Support Group to enable a proactive plan to ensure education forms a focus of the child's plan. We will also have a renewed focus on children with special educational needs. We will strengthen the strategic plan to the SEN strategic Board to ensure those in the criminal justice system are a priority. Headteachers forums will also be used and established links with School improvement team will be critical.

## **Members:**

Members have a key oversight of this work including the natural links with community safety and the partnership arrangements. The challenge will be addressed through Overview and Scrutiny Committee(s). Members will apply healthy challenge to monitor performance and progress of the YOT. Members understand the youth service play a critical role in providing resources in the community to ensure young people have somewhere to go and someone to talk to. The youth service will also play a critical role in the targeted youth work programme developed through the violent reduction programme tackling hot spots within the community.

## **Youth voice:**

Young people have formed part of the development of this strategy. We have worked with Medway Youth Council (MYC) on their annual programme of work which recently focused on gangs. We need to do more with MYC and other young people's groups to ensure they understand YOT and the partnership arrangements (particularly that in relation to the relationship with the Police).

### **Youth Justice Partnership Board governance and membership**

The previous YOT management board developed into a Youth Justice Partnership Board (YJPB) in June 2017. The YJPB retains a clear focus on the principal aim of reducing offending and re-offending and maintains strategic oversight of the delivery and performance of the local youth justice system. The membership of the board provides senior representation from key partners to ensure that young people involved in the youth justice system have access to universal and specialist services delivered by partners and other key agencies.

#### **Membership:**

Director of Public Health - Medway Council – Chair

Medway District Commander - Kent Police – Vice Chair

Portfolio Holder for Children's Services – Medway Council

Assistant Director Children's Services – Medway Council

Assistant Director Children's Services - Medway Community Healthcare

Chair of West Kent Youth Panel – Magistrates Court

Community Safety Partnership Manager – Medway Council

Head of Partnerships – Police Crime Commissioners Office

Head of Strategic Housing – Medway Council

Director of Children's Services - NELFT

Assistant Chief Probation Officer, Case Management Rehabilitation and Resettlement - CRC  
Senior Operational Support Manager Kent and Medway Probation

Head of Innovation & Engagement - YJB South East and East – Youth Justice Board

Partnership Commissioning Programme Lead for Looked After Children – Medway Council

Programme Lead – Children's Commissioning Team. - Medway Council & Medway CCG

Head of Service – 0-25 Year olds

Senior Admin Officer – Medway Council

Operational Manager - YOT Medway Council

Practice Manager – YOT Medway Council

Performance Business Partner – Medway Council

Head Of Partnership Commissioning, Resources and Youth Justice

## **Wider Context**

The YJPB is one partnership group delivering statutory responsibilities for children and young people in Medway. The other partnership groups are:

1. Kent Criminal Justice Board
2. Kent and Medway Reoffending Board
3. Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership (MSCP).
4. Medway Community Safety Partnership Senior Executive Group
5. The Children Delivery Board

Consequently, this plan is also closely aligned with a number of other key complementary strategies and plans which include:

1. Medway Children Services Strategy
2. Medway Joint Commissioning Strategy
3. Medway Early Help Strategy
4. Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership (MSCP)
5. Kent and Medway Police and Crime Plan
6. Medway Community Safety Partnership Plans

## **Performance data – First Time Entrants**

There were 64 first time entrants between April 2018 and March 2019 Medway has seen similar numbers over these few years in relation to first time entrants to the criminal justice system and the aim is to ensure a % of young people that offend are diverted from the criminal justice system by way of the youth panel.

## **Rate of Proven Re-Offending**

This indicator remains a challenge as the success of reducing first time entrants over the last number of years has reduced the number of young people that offend, especially the pre-court population who are at lower likelihood of re-offending.

This has meant that there is now a much smaller cohort of young people in the formal system, presenting with more complex entrenched needs and risk factors that make re-offending more likely.

## Use of the Secure Estate

There were 14 young people sentenced to custody between October 2018 and September 2019 out of a cohort of 73 outcomes issued in Court is 19.2% This is above our target of 6% but relates to a number of offences including groups of young people.

## Resourcing & Value for Money

The Youth Offending responsibilities are funded through contributions from the statutory partner agencies in accordance with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The table below shows the amount of funding from each of the partner agencies for the year. These contributions are reviewed each year. In addition, the YOT receives a Youth Justice Grant from the Ministry of Justice and Department Of Education which is passported through the Youth Justice Board and a grant from the Kent and Medway Police and Crime Commissioner in respect of which there is an annual bidding process.

### Delegated Funds from Partner Agencies

|                        |                 |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| OPCC                   | £90,353         |
| Probation              | £2,500          |
| Health (Public Health) | £56,000         |
| Local Authority        | £158,370        |
| YJB                    | £304,366        |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>£611,589</b> |

### Other:

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| NHS for trauma informed practice/ training      | £56,000 |
| NHS for restorative justice programme/ training | £25,000 |

## Strategic Priorities

| Priority  | Action  | Lead Agency or Agencies   | Timescale         | Success Criteria.  |
|---|---|---|-------------------|--|
| <p><b>Our obsession with be</b></p> <p><b>1. Reoffending and Binary Reoffending</b></p> <p>and</p> <p>2. Serious youth violence</p> <p>3. Vulnerable young people (MISPERs, CME, DA, CSE and Gangs/ County lines etc)</p> | <p>Commit a resource to tackle those at greatest risk of reoffending.</p> <p>Link with the VRU, MTF and SYV programmes of work.</p> <p>Establish working relationship with the integrated adolescent model.</p> <p>Create innovative work and evidenced based programmes.</p> <p>Work with KCC in relation to area model for children with risk and vulnerabilities.</p> <p>Ensure good use of toolkits are in place, understood and making a difference.</p>                                 | <p>Chair and the YJPB</p> <p>Lead- Head Of Partnership Commissioning, resources and Youth Justice</p> | <p>April 2020</p> | <p>Reduction of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. FTE</li> <li>2. Reoffending and</li> <li>3. Use of custody</li> </ol> |
| <p><b><u>Data and analysis:</u></b></p>   | <p>Improved data analysis to inform practice, trends and strategic priorities and recruit a specialist lead in data and performance.</p> <p>To improve the analysis of data, so that the risk factors driving re-offending are understood and responded to in the delivery of partnership services. Work with the YJB on developing better use of YJAF and the reoffending toolkit.</p> <p>Develop a joint strategic needs assessment chapter to inform future trends and areas of focus.</p> | <p>Business and intelligence</p> <p>Public Health</p>   | <p>March 2021</p> |  |

|  |   |   |            |   |
|--|---|---|------------|---|
|  |   |   |            |   |
| <b><u>Young people voice</u></b>   | <p>Interaction of young people:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Strategic: <p>Participation, engagement and attendance at the board</p> <p>Young people involved in the strategy/ plan</p> </li> <li>2. Operational <p>Young people's working groups looking at improvements in how we work and their environment.</p> </li> <li>3. Front line: <p>Delivery of their plan</p> <p>Engagement and participation in YOT</p> <p>Feedback and evaluation</p> </li> </ol> | <p>YJPB<br/>And<br/>HoS</p> <p>YOT Managers</p> <p>YOT</p>                    | March 2021 | <p>Young people ask for 3 areas for improvement and see the board effect change.</p> <p>Young people feel they have a voice and it makes a difference</p> <p>High levels of engagement and feedback is that young people feel supported and listened too.</p> <p>Young people feel safer.</p> |
| <b><u>Improved health pathways and outcomes:</u></b><br><br>(Think about this linking to KLOE) | <p>Young people pathways into emotional health and wellbeing services improves and young people accessing support in a timely way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Real focus on neurodevelopment pathway.</li> </ul> <p>Young people to better access health pathways to ensure we identify educational needs (including speech and language) and wider health needs.</p>   | <p>NELFT<br/>And programme<br/>lead</p> <p>MCH<br/>And programme<br/>lead</p> | March 2021 | <p>Reduction in binary offending.</p> <p>Increase in young people accessing support.</p>  |



|  |  |  |            |  |
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|  | Improved screening arrangements needed. Health services to better understand their role in supporting young people in the CJS.   | Educational Psychology (Wendy Vincent)   |            | Improved Education, Training or Employment                         |
| <b><u>Serious youth violence/ crime:</u></b> | <p>Work alongside:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community safety partnership in relation to Gangs and County Lines programme of work.</li> <li>- Support the implementation of the Medway Task Force and ensure the programme supports address key areas of youth violence</li> <li>- Link with the 1. Violence Reduction Unit (PCC programme) and 2. Serious Youth Violence (Home Office) programme and establish key processes to address those of greatest concern</li> <li>- Link with integrated adolescent team and development of risk panel</li> </ul> <p>Ensure suitable and appropriate accommodation meets the needs of young people in the CJS. This includes working within our provider framework.</p> | <p>HoS And CSP Manager</p> <p>HoS and Kent Police</p> <p>HoS and KCC / Kent Police/ PCC</p> <p>Children's Services</p> <p>Housing/ Commissioning</p> | March 2021 | <p>Reduction in Offending</p> <p>Reduction in binary offences.</p> |
| <b><u>Workforce training:</u></b>            | <p>Continue to develop and deliver against our desistance model. Child first model.</p> <p>Deliver to YOT and wider partnership:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Trauma informed practice (through psychology pathways)</li> </ol>   | Psychologist   |            | <p>Reduction in Offending</p> <p>Reduction in binary offences.</p> |

|  |   |  |            |  |
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|  | <p>2. Positive Behaviour Support built into Schools and community services</p> <p>3. Develop restorative practice wider in the youth justice service including school/ academies.</p>   | <p>BILD/<br/>Commissioning</p> <p>RJ Coordinator</p>           | March 2021 | Improved victim support and feedback.  |
| <p><b><u>Implement national standards</u></b></p> <p><b><u>And</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Driving Improvement to achieve outstanding outcomes for children</u></b></p> | <p>Children in the justice system often have multiple and complex needs. Where possible, we should seek to divert children from the justice system entirely and address these needs.</p> <p>For those who do offend, our core focus must continue to be; rehabilitation, tackling the underlying causes of youth offending, and delivering a system that gives children the support they need to break the cycle of offending and build productive and fulfilling lives.</p> <p>We want to continue our focus on risk, safeguarding and desistance and improvements in our assessment, plans and reviews.</p> <p>We want to be a learning a learning organisation and the new audit framework will ensure this takes place.</p> | <p>YOT</p> <p>YJP Board</p> <p>Director Of People and MSCP</p> | March 2021 | <p>Outstanding outcomes for children so they can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Thrive</li> <li>2. Learn and develop</li> <li>3. And are Healthy</li> </ol> <p>- Reduction of those needing statutory intervention</p> |

## Appendix A

## YJP and Youth Offending Team - Delivery Plan

| Operational priority – Prevent Youth Crime  |  |                         |           |  |
|---|--|-------------------------|-----------|--|
| Priority  | Action   | Lead Agency or Agencies | Timescale | Success Criteria.<br><br>Medway Young People's Outcome Framework   |
| Improve emotional health and wellbeing providing easy and natural access to services when they need help quickly. | NELFT to resource a post in YOT appropriate to support decision making and pathway planning. | NELFT                   |           | 90% young people assessed within 12 weeks NICE guidance.<br><br>75% young people access treatment within 18 weeks. |

|  |   |  |                                     |  |
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| <p>Improved participation in education, training and employment</p> <p>Improved family relationships by ensuring Early Help deliver evidence based intervention (example restorative justice, trauma informed practice, family group conferencing).</p> <p>Respond to the potentially changing nature of youth crime e.g, criminal exploitation, extremism and radicalisation, child-sexual exploitation and gang associated drug dealing expanding along 'county lines'.</p> <p>Put the victim at the heart of delivery and deliver a systemic approach to RJ in the community (initial focus on foster carers and Schools).</p> <p>Address and prioritise children who are NFA through the OOCd process to ensure we are not missing opportunities to intervene and support those at risk of entering the CJS.</p> | <p>Young people supported into ETE, or DWP 'be yourself programme'.</p> <p>Workforce training for Early Help, School and other services in: Restorative Justice, Trauma Informed Practice, Positive Behaviour Support etc.</p> <p>Recruit to a dedicated resource to deliver analysis around data trends and performance. Strengthened links to the integrated adolescent team, safeguarding and MASH.</p> <p>Ensure we become a restorative justice YJP.</p> <p>Review the process in place and create a task and finish group to address any areas for improvement.</p> | <p>Youth Service and IAG team</p> <p>Teaching academy and MSCP</p> <p>Performance and intelligence</p> <p>Children's Services (safeguarding) And VRU Coordinator</p> <p>Victim Coordinator</p> <p>OOCd task and finish group</p> | <p>March 2021</p> <p>March 2021</p> | <p>75% in ETE</p> <p>Complete full use of bid/ awards of funding. Work with teaching partnership regarding future arrangements.</p> <p>Able to report on vulnerabilities and exploited children to ensure we target those that need additional support.</p> <p>Reduced risk.</p> <p>80% of all YOT staff trained in RJ. 60 senior staff in CS trained. 300 partners trained in RJ.</p> <p>Reduction of young people NFA with repeat offending.</p> |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|

|  |   |                            |  |  |
|--|---|----------------------------|--|--|
| Ensure that children who are LAC or have SEN are supported appropriately ensure their needs, risks and vulnerabilities are given adequate focus. | Ensure young people who are SEN and LAC are known and ensure joint planning exists. | YOT and Safeguarding teams |  | <p>Increase in those accessing SaLT and other appropriate pathways.</p> <p>Monitor those with EHCP/ SEN.</p> <p>Monitor LAC and ensure a priority.</p> |
|--|---|----------------------------|--|--|

| Strategic Priority 2 - Reduce re-offending  |   |   |           |   |
|---|---|---|-----------|---|
| Priority  | Action  | Lead Agency or Agencies   | Timescale | Success Criteria.<br><br>Medway Young People's Outcome Framework. |
| <p>To reduce re-offending by young people in Medway with a particular focus on the relatively small proportion of young people who commit a disproportionate amount of crime in Medway.</p> <p>Good assessments, intervention and exit plans exist, providing young</p> | <p>Link with the Violence Reduction Unit, Serious Youth Violence and Medway Task Force.</p> <p>Ensure the work of YOT is good and quality assured to ensure</p> | <p>YOT and</p> <p>Violence reduction unit<br/>Serious youth violence<br/>Medway task force</p> <p>YOT</p> |           | <p>Reduction in reoffending.</p> <p>0% inadequate</p>             |

|   |   |     |            |   |
|---|---|-----|------------|---|
| people with the framework to fulfil their potential.  | continuous learning and development.  |     | March 2021 | <10% of audits judged as RI<br>>70% audits judged as good<br>>10% audits judged as outstanding. |
| To ensure that those committing offences are seen as child first rather than young offenders (Child First model).                                       | Develop the programme of work in YOT around desistance.   | YOT |            | Young people's feedback on their plans and engagement with YOT.                                 |
| High quality interventions that contribute to reducing re-offending and maintain the confidence of partner agencies, the courts and the general public. | Develop an intensive support service/ package to engage with those at most risk through our floating support commissioned services. | YOT |            | Reduction in use of custody.<br>Reduction in reoffending.                                       |

### Strategic Priority 3 - Safeguard Young People from Harm

| Priority   | Action  | Lead Agency or Agencies | Timescale | Success Criteria.<br><br>Medway Young People's Outcome Framework.  |
|--|---|-------------------------|-----------|--|
| To ensure that where vulnerability and risk to the public overlap, safeguarding needs are given sufficient attention in agency plans to address offending behaviour (example young people's offending behaviour is being influenced by their | Link with integrated adolescent team, VRU, MTF and SYV.<br><br>YOT to ensure we are completing appropriate risk tools/ assessments. | YOT                     |           | Reduce statutory intervention.<br><br>Increase in step downs and CIN cases.<br><br>Greater understand in staff around criminal exploitation. |

|  |   |  |                                     |  |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| <p>own experiences of exploitative and abusive relationships).</p> <p>Ensure that time spent in police custody is minimised and the environment is more young person friendly.</p> <p>Implement intensive packages of intervention to those at greatest risk</p> <p>Promote improved engagement between young people and the police.</p> <p>To ensure that where a child or young person is a victim of crime they have the support they need to cope and recover and are appropriately safeguarded.</p> | <p>Deep dive into the appropriate use of custody and placements of children.</p> <p>Develop an intensive support service/ package to engage with those at most risk through our floating support commissioned services.</p> <p>YOT Police officer to do more meaningful engagement. Targeted programmes for joint delivery (example sport).</p> <p>Ensure appropriate assessment, screening and toolkits completed.</p> | <p>Kent Police</p> <p>Partnership Commissioning</p> <p>Kent Police</p> <p>RJ Coordinator</p> | <p>March 2021</p> <p>March 2021</p> | <p>Reduction in children in and held in custody overnight.</p> <p>Good use of PACE beds.</p> <p>Reduction in reoffending.</p> <p>Feedback from young people improved from 2019.</p> <p>Good range of programmes involving the Polive (football match/ cooking etc)</p> <p>Evaluation and feedback.</p> |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|

|   |   |                         |  |  |
|---|---|-------------------------|--|--|
| <p>Safeguard those whose offending is most likely to be influenced by their vulnerability such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Looked after children</li><li>2. Those in or associated with a gang</li></ol> | <p>Train staff in use of toolkits.</p> <p>Implement pathways that are understood and link to risk and resource panel.</p> | <p>Risk panel chair</p> |  | <p>Toolkits in place and understood.</p> <p>Risk panel reducing risks with multi-agency plan.</p> <p>Reduction on family/ placement breakdown.</p> |
|---|---|-------------------------|--|--|

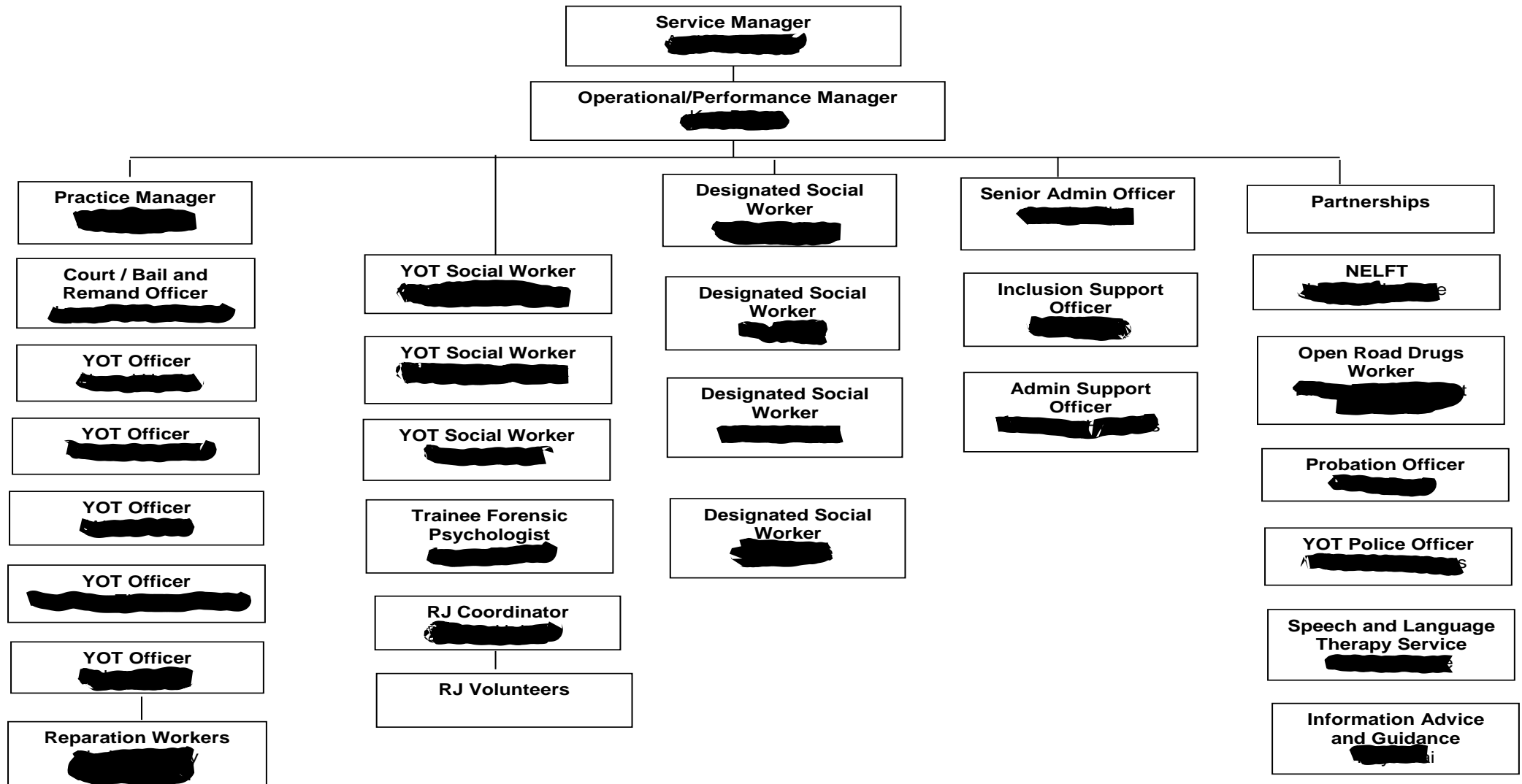


Strategic Priority 4 – Protect the Public from Harm

| Priority  | Action   | Lead Agency or Agencies             | Timescale         | Success Criteria.<br><br>Medway Young People's Outcome Framework         |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| <p>Ensure that children and young people who pose a risk of harm to others are appropriately assessed and effectively supervised to promote a reduction in that risk.</p> <p>To minimise the potential for a 'transition gap' between youth and adult services where risk of harm to others is relevant.</p> <p>Ensure that the risks are understood and employed within the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).</p> | <p>Complete timely assessments and work in partnership.</p> <p>Deliver evidenced based interventions.</p> <p>YOT and Probation to have a joint post/ arrangement in place.</p> | <p>YOT</p> <p>YOT and Probation</p> | <p>March 2021</p> | <p>100% meeting national standards.</p> <p>Reduction in reoffending.</p> |

## Appendix B

## Structure



## Appendix C      National Context

“The youth justice system” is the formal process that begins once a child reaches the age of 10 years but under the age of 18 years and:

- has committed an offence
- receives an out of court disposal
- or is charged to appear in court

The youth justice system was set up under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The aim of the youth justice system is to prevent offending by children and young people aged 10 to 17 years. As part of that Act, local Youth Offending Services were established and are supported by the National Youth Justice Board.

The role of the Youth Justice Board is to:

- Oversee the youth justice system in England and Wales
- Work to prevent offending and reoffending by children and young people under the age of 18
- Ensure that custody for them is safe, secure, and addresses the causes of their offending behaviour

The Youth Justice Board are also committed to supporting local Youth Offending Services to deliver against three outcomes which have been set by central government, these are listed below, which Medway is fully committed to.

- Reducing the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system
- Reducing re-offending of those young people already within the youth justice system.
- Reducing the number of young people receiving a custodial sentence. <sup>1</sup>

## **Medway's Youth Offending Service**

It is the duty of all agencies to try to reduce offending behaviour under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Medway Youth Offending Service is a partnership of voluntary and statutory agencies.

Our Youth Offending Team (YOT) is staffed by a multi-agency team working with children and young people who have demonstrated or are at risk of developing anti-social behaviour.

The service currently consists of approximately 19 YOT staff

## Appendix D

## Glossary of Terms

YOT – Youth Offending Team

YJB – Youth Justice Board

YP – Young People

YOI – Young Offenders Institute

KCJB – Kent Criminal Justice Board

SEG – Strategic Executive Group

FTE – First Time Entrants (to the Youth Justice System)

MSCB – Medway Safeguarding Children Board

QA – Quality Assurance

IOMU – Integrated Offender Management Unit

ISS – Intensive Support and Surveillance

ETE – Education Training and Employment

NEET – Not in Education Training or Employment

NHS – National Health Service

PCC – Police & Crime Commissioner

JAC – Junior Attendance Centre

CQC – Care Quality Commission

JTAI – Joint Targeted Area Inspection